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With Brush and Pen . . .

Suggestions for some of the Newer Phases of Public School Art Instruction . . . . . .

By James Hall, Supervisor of Drawing, Public Schools, Springfield, Mass.

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Introduction.

A BROADER conception of art education is coming into existence among the directors of drawing in the public schools.

That the individuality of the child should be respected and his own expression encouraged, that he should be made to feel himself a creator, and that he should be led to see beauty and to create things beautiful — these ideas should permeate the work of the teacher.

It is not long since precise and mechanical directions regarding even such things as the placing of a drawing upon the paper were thought necessary in order to secure uniform results from a class. Nothing could be more antagonistic to the spirit of art, for, though subject to universal laws, art, in its very nature, must always be individual in its expression.

And so, if we are to attempt to teach art, or rather to develop artistic feeling, we must treat the children as individuals, and encourage original thought instead of trying to bring them all to one fixed standard.

Experience proves that, under the influence of a sympathetic and artistic teacher, children love to exercise the artistic instincts of their natures, and often gain surprising power of expression. They have, heretofore, been limited far too much in many ways.

Mediums or materials to be used in our instruction should be determined by the nature of the subjects to be drawn, as well as by the needs of the pupils. Common sense must be a guide always in such decisions.

While the brush seems best for the little children, for many reasons, and is a necessity always in giving true color instruction, it must be remembered that at times the careful study of outline is desirable, or carelessness will be apt to creep into the work. By no means does this book advocate the substitution of the brush and pen for the pencil. The pencil is by far the

most convenient and best medium for much of the work that is included in a well-considered course of art instruction.

The present interest in brush-work, as well as in pen and ink drawing, among supervisors seems sufficient reason for publishing on these subjects something containing such practical suggestions as only experience in school work can give.

The illustrations, particularly those produced from children's drawings, will, it is believed, prove a stimulus to those who are still working in the old and beaten paths. That those paths lead to an understanding of the *science* of drawing, and should not be entirely forsaken, is something not to be lost sight of by enthusiasts in the more artistic methods.

The *grammar* of drawing should be somewhere included in our course. It does not, however, in itself constitute art instruction, nor will it (taught never so well) infuse into our American life the love of beauty, a reverent and sensitive appreciation of nature's riches, nor will it implant ideals in the mind which, working outward, will tend to make streets and homes more harmonious in appearance. These things are sorely needed to-day amid the harshness and discordancy, the tawdriness and sham to be found in the lives and surroundings of too many of our people.

Surely the drawings that the children put on paper are of little consequence in themselves. A dirty set of sheets, much paper spoiled—these things are nothing if earnest effort has been put forth. We are not teachers of drawing alone. It is for us to help make men and women who feel the God-given power within themselves. The world is too full of drudges—people without ideals, machines that work because they must in order to keep up existence.

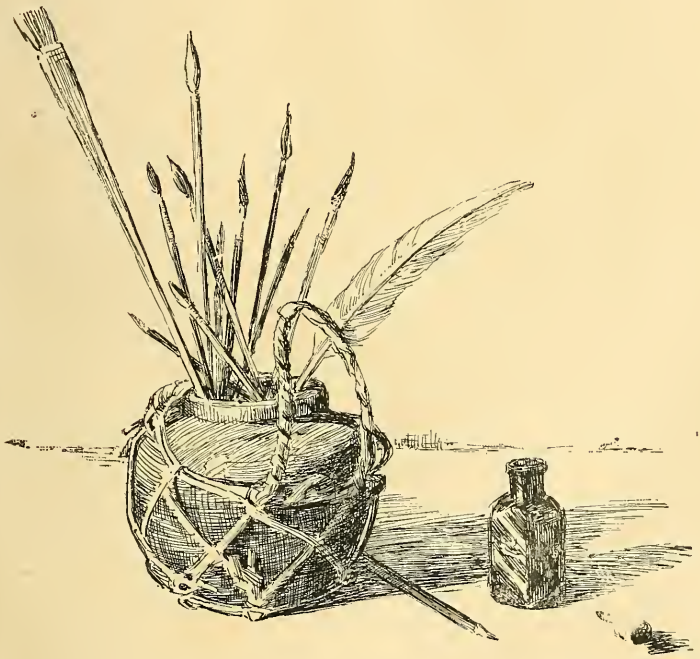
If there is to be any measure of contentment in our country among the people who work with their hands, there must be developed something of the artist-artisan spirit of the middle ages, and the spirit of William Mor-

ris of our own day. Then shall be known what Ruskin calls the "joy of the workman," the joy which a creator feels in his own creation, wrought lovingly, conscientiously, his best effort, the child of his brain and his hands.

If we help to bring about with the children this spirit of the true artist, we do our work well. It matters little by what means it is done. It is the *spirit* of the work, not the medium, that is of real importance.

Art directors should base their plans of work on broad principles. This book does not attempt to lay out a course or even part of a course in drawing.

It is hoped, however, that the hints here given may be of practical value to teachers who wish to give the children a chance to express themselves with brush and pen.



Brush Drawing.

Materials.

MANY directors of drawing have hesitated about introducing brush-work into the grades on account of the supposed great expense of materials. It is now possible, however, to buy these very cheaply in quality sufficiently good for school purposes.

Brushes.—Sable brushes (numbers 6 and 7) set in metal with wooden handles, can now be bought in quantity for $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 5 cents apiece. Number 6 is a convenient size for primary, and number 7 for grammar school use.

Japanese brushes are sold to schools at 5 cents apiece. They are larger than the sable brushes referred to, but are more flexible, and come to a good point. They are excellent while they last, but are less durable than the sable, as the brush is liable to separate from the bamboo handle.

Colors.—In many ways it is most satisfactory to buy the cake colors in boxes. Boxes containing the six standard colors, red, orange, yellow, green, blue and violet, also a warm gray and a cool gray are sold for twenty or twenty-five cents apiece.

When boxes are used, the colors are mixed in the inside of the cover which is pressed into three compartments and enameled white for the purpose.

Moist colors in tubes cost about $1.00 per dozen tubes. These wet up and mix more easily than the cake colors and are therefore better. However, more time and labor is required for distribution and collection of material than when the boxes are used.

Quite satisfactory brush-drawings are possible with

the use of only three colors, crimson lake, Prussian blue, and gamboge; but for delicate gradations, or for a brilliant orange or violet these colors are not true. It is desirable to provide the six spectrum colors.

Pans.—Tube colors may be used on ordinary flat-bottomed tin pie-plates. In quantity these plates, 7 inches in diameter, cost about 1½ cents apiece. It is advisable to have them painted with two coats of the best white bath-tub enamel. This prevents rusting and gives a good surface on which to mix the colors. The enamel is not very expensive, and a careful schoolboy can paint the pans.

To take the place of the plates a device of pressed tin, with six compartments, enameled white is now sold.

Experience seems to show, however, that the plate is quite as good, for when water-colors are properly handled there is no advantage in having them in separate compartments. In fact it is much easier to use the colors when they are placed side by side on the plate.

Cups for Water.—Pressed tin cups, 2½ or 3 inches in diameter at the top and smaller at the bottom, and 1½ inches deep are excellent for holding the water. These should also be enameled to prevent rusting. The cup-cake tins used in bakeries cost about 1½ cents apiece. The thinness of the tin and the consequent ease with which the cups fit into each other make them convenient for schoolroom use, as they can be packed into a small space.

Paper.—Any good drawing paper is suitable for brush-work. That which in the 9x12 inch size weighs 9 lbs. to the ream is sufficiently heavy not to cockle up when the color is applied.

It is best to provide cream white, gray and buff paper. Then the character of the subject to be drawn can be considered and the paper that best harmonizes can be chosen by the pupils.

Different methods will occur to different teachers, but under the best conditions, ten or fifteen minutes will be consumed in the distribution and collection of materials for a water-color lesson. It is, therefore, advisable to adopt some well-considered plan. It is a saving of time to have the lesson in drawing the first in the school session, so that materials can as far as possible be made ready before school begins.

When this is done as described here, a model teacher can give out all materials in less than four minutes without the least confusion.

If color in tubes is used, the pans should be prepared with the colors upon them, and placed ready for distribution upon a table. Then the children may pass up by rows, each child taking a pan to his desk.

The cups should be placed on a tray and filled two-thirds full of water. Then as the teacher passes up and down the aisles with the tray, each pupil can take his cup.

Brushes and paper should be given to the pupils sitting in the front seats. They can quickly pass these materials to the others sitting back of them.

The best position on the desk for the water-cup is the farther left corner. It is least liable there to be tipped over, and if it does spill, it does little harm, as the water goes to the floor.

The box or pan is least in the way when placed directly in front of the cup.

It is always well to give to each pupil a piece of practice paper on which to try his colors, in addition to the sheet on which the drawing is to be made.

A piece of blotting-paper is sometimes useful. When too much color has been put upon the paper, the color may be lifted by careful application of the blotter.

If yellow and blue are mixed to make green, twice as much at least of the gamboge will be required as of the Prussian blue.

If the cap of a tube can not be readily unscrewed, hold a lighted match so as to heat the cap all around. It will then easily turn.

Color in tubes should not be ordered in quantities so large that it will need to be kept many months, as it is liable to harden within the tubes. It is then useless.

Intelligence must be exercised by the teacher in the care of all the materials used in brush-work.

Brushes.—Brushes can be best kept in a vase or jar, the handles of the brushes being downward.

At the end of a lesson each pupil should thoroughly rinse his brush in the cup of water, and carefully bring it to a point by drawing it over the edge of the cup. It is especially necessary that the brushes be thoroughly washed after using the ink, or the colors will be soiled when the brush is used for color-work.

The brushes should never be used to wash out boxes or pans, as such treatment will quickly wear them out.

During the summer vacation the brushes must be rolled up in a cloth with camphor, as otherwise the moths are liable to eat them.

Color Boxes and Pans.—Color boxes should be kept clean. Each pupil may be provided with a small sponge or cloth for the purpose of wiping out his box after the lesson, or the teacher may let several of the most careful pupils pass up and down the aisles and wash the boxes of the class.

The same cleanliness should be observed if pans are used with the tube colors.

Tube Colors. — The tube colors can easily be wasted unless the teacher exercises care. No more color should be placed on the pans than it is reasonable to suppose will be needed for the lesson, but no good color need be washed off at the end of the lesson. To keep the color from drying between times, the pans should be placed face to face.

Only such colors as are needed for the subject to be drawn should be placed on the pan. These should be near the margin and about half an inch apart.

It is well to have some order in placing the colors. Beginning with the lightest, and going to the darkest, from right to left, is as satisfactory as any arrangement.

First Practice.

HE first lessons in the primary grades will be necessarily given to instruction in the use of materials. Little children need to be told very definitely just how to hold the brush, how to convey the water to the pans, and how to mix the color. The same instruction, hardly less definite, is desirable in all grades. The brush should be held in a vertical position and at the base of the handle, and all strokes should be made by moving the arm, not the fingers. The older children can steady the hand by resting the fourth and little fingers upon the desk, and sliding upon the finger-nails, but the smaller children should work without touching the hand to the paper. This applies to general brush drawings; not, of course, to the laying of washes or the painting of broad surfaces. The first brush lessons with the little children would best be with color rather than with ink, though it matters little what color is used. It will be found helpful to give as first exercises the drawing of simple lines. Curved lines will be quite as valuable as straight ones in giving practice in the use of the brush and they are far more helpful as a step toward the work from nature which should follow as soon as possible. The straight line is without interest to the children, and is seldom found in nature, whereas the essential beauty of all grasses and flowers lies in their beautiful curvature.

A leading art teacher has broadly classified curves into three kinds: The curve of force, the reversed curve, and the spiral. This classification, though not exact, has been found most helpful in developing a perception of beauty among teachers and children. Practice of these

curves alone and in combination is strongly recommended, not only in the first brush lessons but also as an occasional exercise for giving muscular control and as a help toward freedom in the use of the brush. The accompanying illustrations will suggest exercises of this kind.

Abstract practice is always as far as possible to be avoided, and these exercises of curves should not be too frequent nor long continued. The lessons can be given, however, to the little children so that the curves will, to them, have a meaning. The curve of force is the "rocket" or a "fountain;" the reversed curve a

" wave " or a " cow's horn; " while the spiral suggests any number of things to the childish imagination, from the elephant's trunk to the tiny snail shell.

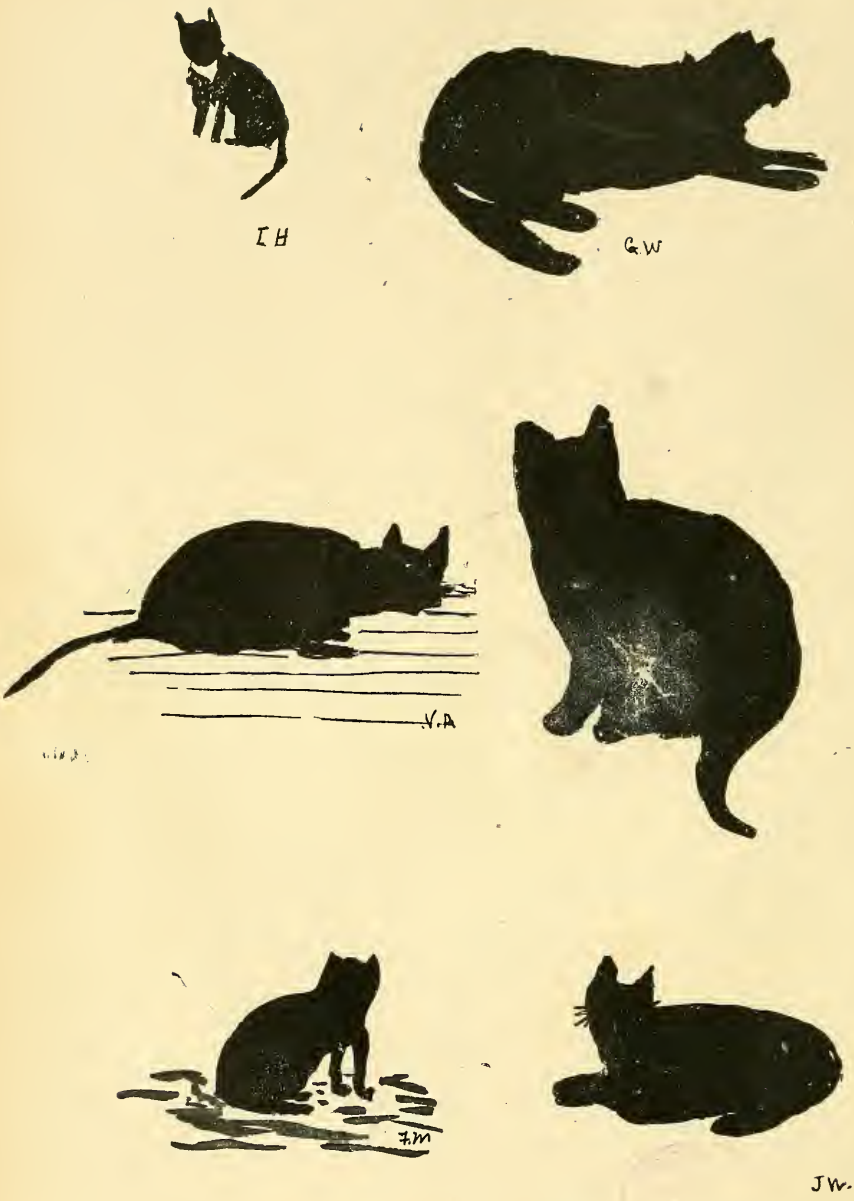
The width of a brush line in first practice should be about as in the illustrations. It should not be forgotten that the best handling of any medium is that which is most natural. A brush line as fine as a pencil line is possible, and sometimes desirable, but should not be attempted until some facility of handling has been acquired. Varying the width of a stroke by change of pressure upon the brush should be practiced after the pupils are able to draw a firm even line. Vigorous brush-work requires rather a rapid movement; hence careful thinking is all important before the brush touches the paper. Trial movement, " making believe draw," is helpful.

No preliminary pencil lines are ever to be used in brush drawing except in very rare cases in advanced work. Such crutches take away the real freedom and charm of the medium.

Some of the subjects which seem made for brush drawing are the grasses, sedges and simple leaves like the clover and the willow. It is better to attempt simple sprays of leaves from the first in preference to single leaves.

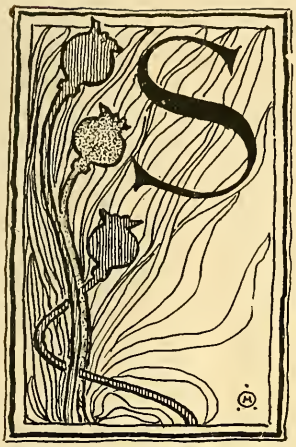
The representation of color by the younger children will be crude, as indeed will be the drawing, and the teacher must not misunderstand this crudity. The child's best effort is all that we have any right to expect. Care must at all times be encouraged by the teacher and suggestions given that will help the children to see the essentials, the long lines and the character of large masses. We must not judge children's drawings by art-school standards. We should commend all sincere effort, and the teacher who becomes familiar with childish art will soon develop new standards of judgment and find many drawings possessing a kind of dainty clumsiness and a charm sometimes lacking in work by grown up people.

Drawings by Primary School Pupils.



Drawings from Life by Primary Pupils

Ink=Work.



OME valuable lessons in simplicity of treatment have been given to the public through the recent fad of the artistic poster. Done, as they are, in flat tones, they are in many cases practically silhouettes. With an absolute disregard for all minor details, it becomes all the more necessary that the long lines and large masses possess firmness and character.

The beauty of a silhouette has long been appreciated by the Japanese, and we may find frequent examples in any collection of Japanese prints. The sun or moon throwing the shadows of a vine on a window-curtain show us again the beauty of a silhouette, and the electric light gives us a more intense effect of the same kind, with its inky shadows of branches on the sidewalk.

Just at evening we may see the trees in flat masses against the sky, or the weeds and grasses on the brow of a hill, full of suggestion for decorative one-tone drawings.

Ordinary writing ink may be used very effectively on white paper, but is more pleasing on a paper of a gray tint, or on a background of a very light tint of the ink.

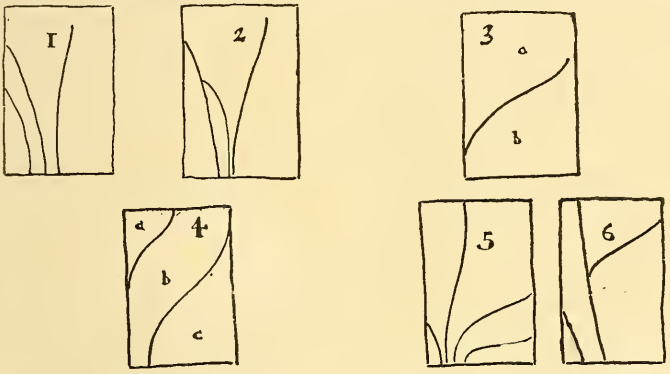
Autumn supplies us plentifully with subjects. The withered weeds, plants that have gone to seed, twigs stripped of all but two or three leaves, are especially appropriate.

The effectiveness of the drawing depends greatly upon the arrangement within its enclosing form. It is

well for the teachers to give an object-lesson before the class. On differently proportioned pieces of paper the twig or plant may be placed in various positions. The children will notice which enclosing form is best suited to the subject, and which arrangements in the form are most pleasing. The following thoughts should be borne in mind by the teacher in developing the subject.

1st. Avoid dividing the sides of the enclosing form into halves, thirds or fourths, or any easily distinguished parts, as in Fig. 1. Figure 2 is better, being more subtle and less mechanical.

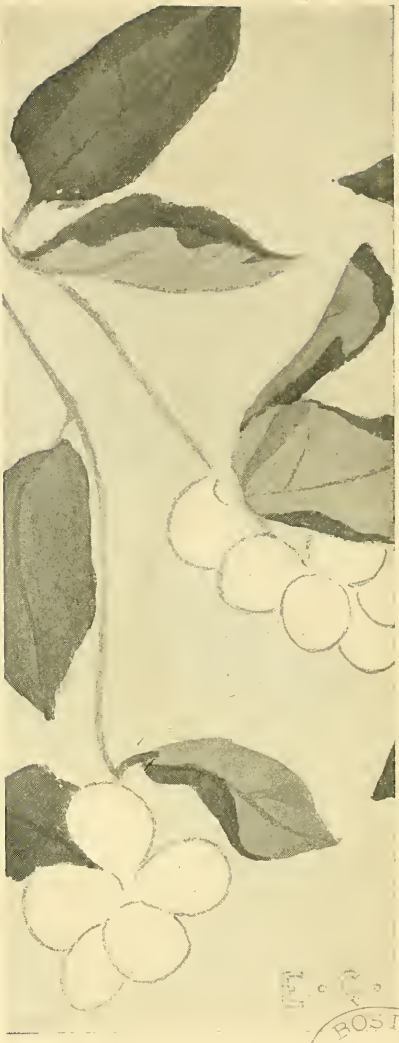
2d. Avoid space divisions which are equal in area or similar in form. Figs. 3 and 4 are both open to criticism in these respects. In Fig. 3 the spaces *a* and *b*



are both equal and similar. In Fig. 4, though unequal, *a* and *c* form similar figures, while *b* and *c*, though dissimilar, are too nearly equal in area. Figs. 5 and 6 show more satisfactory space divisions. They transgress none of the preceding rules and have in their divisions a variety of form and a gradation of size.

It is also well to avoid a scattered effect.

Things should be so arranged as to form a unit. There should be a principal mass larger and more important than any of the others, on which the eye naturally would rest. Smaller masses should give us the feeling of an echo of this principal mass, but should never divide the interest of the drawing.



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If the object to be drawn is sufficiently large, as a mullein or cornstalk it may be placed at the front of the room. In the autumn when these are brown they are excellent subjects, and placed in this way against a light background appear practically as silhouettes, so much of the detail is lost at a little distance. Smaller subjects should be arranged by each pupil at his desk.

In drawing, the first thought should be for the characteristic line of growth, or what Ruskin calls the "gesture of the plant." The masses may sometimes be broken, as in the accompanying drawings, the paper being left here and there in such a way as to suggest a separation of edges.

Occasionally work of this kind will be interesting for both grammar and high schools and leads better than does anything else I know to true conventionalization.

What the children call a "white shadow" may also be interesting as an experiment in decorative effect.

To make this a pencil outline of the subject must be drawn very simply and then the background filled in. This exercise requires much care and it is best not to try too large a subject as it is difficult to cover large spaces evenly with the ink. An example is given of a drawing of woodbine done in this way.

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Drawing in Values by Seventh Grade Pupil.

The same effect can be obtained by drawing in Chinese white on black paper.

Values can be effectively represented in ink washes, and this work is strongly advised for upper grammar grades. It is best to choose for subjects things with pronounced differences of color-values. It is well for the pupils to decide before beginning the drawing, how many values are necessary to give the effect of color. Not more than three or four should be attempted. It is often helpful for the children to make a scale of values on the practice paper before drawing. This helps to a more definite appreciation of the differences in light and dark that must be shown to express the colors in the subject before them. The reproduction of the Japanese drawing and the child's drawing of the woodbine, show color values expressed in an interesting way. There are great possibilities for drawings of many kinds with brush and ink, and the convenience of the medium strongly recommends it for frequent use.

The cat studies on page 20 were drawn directly from life with brush and ink alone. Sometimes, as in working from a child posing, it is helpful to first sketch in white chalk on gray paper the leading lines and large proportions. Then the masses of dark can be washed in solid, and other parts of the figure boldly outlined. Just how far it is wise to attempt "pose-drawing" in the grades remains an open question. There is no doubt, however, that properly taught it does much to develop observation of proportion. Neither is there any doubt of the interest taken by the children in this work.

Color.

A STUDY of the names of colors, of the various harmonies scientifically found, and the use of colored papers to produce designs—these may all be of value. Doubtless such work has served to introduce color study into the schools when nothing better could be attempted.

Our aim should be, however, to lead the children to *love* beautiful color. The teaching must be done by contagion.

The teacher herself must feel color, and then the children, chameleon-like, will take to themselves the color of the teacher.

To teach color, artistically speaking, brush and pigments are a necessity, and work from nature will do more than all the theory that can be given to awaken the color sense.

From the very first lesson children should be encouraged to look for color as well as for form, and to strive to reproduce the colors before them. Even the little children can begin to look for variation of color in so simple a subject as a blade of grass. "Is it green or blue-green or yellow-green?" or "What color shall we mix with our green to make just the color of the grass?" are questions to be often asked of the pupils.

In the grammar grades, subjects should be chosen that are full of color, and the children should attempt to show as much as possible its true effect. Flat decorative color-effects if not true, are not to be recommended in work from nature. Such work should follow as a decorative exercise.

In teaching the use of water-color, one of the first things to impress upon the children is the fact that perfectly flat color is not often present in nature. There-

Mucha (Paris).

From "L'Estambe Moderne."

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ter itself which should be the most prominent part of the desig hen finished,—a thought often disregarded. A sq e or oblong is best as an enclosing form since ype is to be set up about it. The letter should be placed either in the upper right corner of the square near the word to which the letter belongs, or it should occupy nearly the entire space. Plain Roman lettering is most satisfactory and should be copied from some good examples like those on the cover of the *Century* or *Scribner's* magazines. All foolish, "fancy" lettering should be discouraged. Our alphabet is an inheritance. It is old enough to be treated respectfully, and it is best not to try for originality, so much in the letters as in the decoration. "Strange's Alphabets" is a book which every art teacher should possess and study. There is a chance for the exercise of much taste in the drawing of even a plain letter. Aristocratic proportions belong to the true Roman alphabet and to realize those fine proportions is something well worth while.

Now applying our lessons from Mucha's panel to the letter design we decide that to get the most satisfactory effect we need to use black, half-tone and white. Examples show how this can be effectively done. The letter to be properly strong must be always either black or white according to the treatment of the decoration.

To apply the lesson of harmony of lines, we decide that if we have a curved line letter like S the decoration would best be mostly of straight lines to contrast with the letter and to repeat the enclosing form. If on the contrary, we have a letter like T, having straight lines vertical and horizontal that in themselves repeat the lines of the enclosing form, we can, then, with good effect, introduce lines contrasting in character into the decorative treatment. Collections of good initials should be made by the pupils as examples to study.

These same principles can be applied to any kind of decorative treatment as a head or foot-piece or a book cover.

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Original Initials by
Ninth Grade Pupils

Design.

VERY student of design knows that many of the most beautiful forms of Greek design, particularly those found on the vases, were evolved by use of the brush. The natural brush-stroke is in itself graceful, and with a twist or turn or extra bit of pressure, design almost creates itself. The free copying of some of the brush-like forms of Greek ornament should give to the pupils the *spirit* of design. They should do this copying without use of pencil lines, except very rarely as guide lines in the most difficult forms. This copying should not be done so much to get an exact reproduction, as to catch the feeling of the artist who produced it, so that the pupil himself can work in a similar spirit and produce designs of his own.

Nature should be taken only as a suggestion for abstract forms of beauty. For example, note the variety of units suggested by a bit of hydrangea, and see how one has been applied to a surface pattern.

Almost anything in nature is beautiful and suggestive to a designer.

The sections of vegetables like the cucumber or lemon are good. Even pop-corn has been used effectively by some teachers as a basis for units of design.

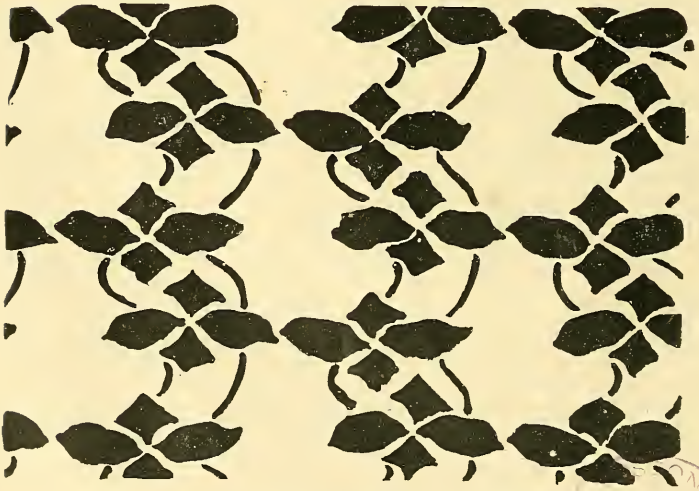
Nature is full of suggestion to those who learn to see beauty.

"Plant Form and Design," by Midgeley and Lilley; Lewis F. Day's books and Frank G. Jackson's book on "Design" should be mastered by those who attempt to teach the subject.

The children enjoy designing if only they are given the right start. Book covers are good as problems in design. Many excellent examples can be collected by pupils and teachers.

Units of Designs
Suggested by the Hydrangea

Design from Unit Suggested by a Section of Cucumber.



Design from Unit Suggested by Hydrangea.

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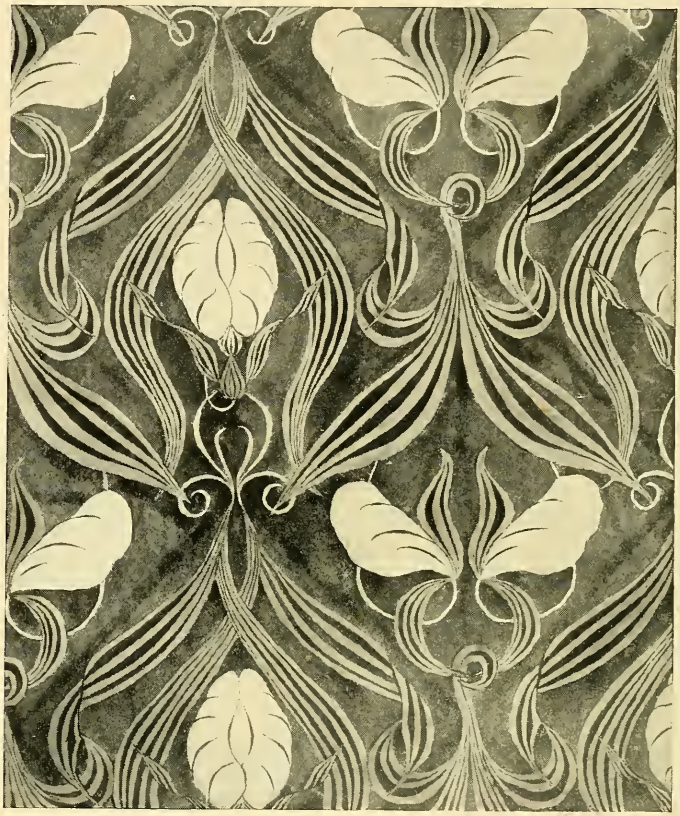
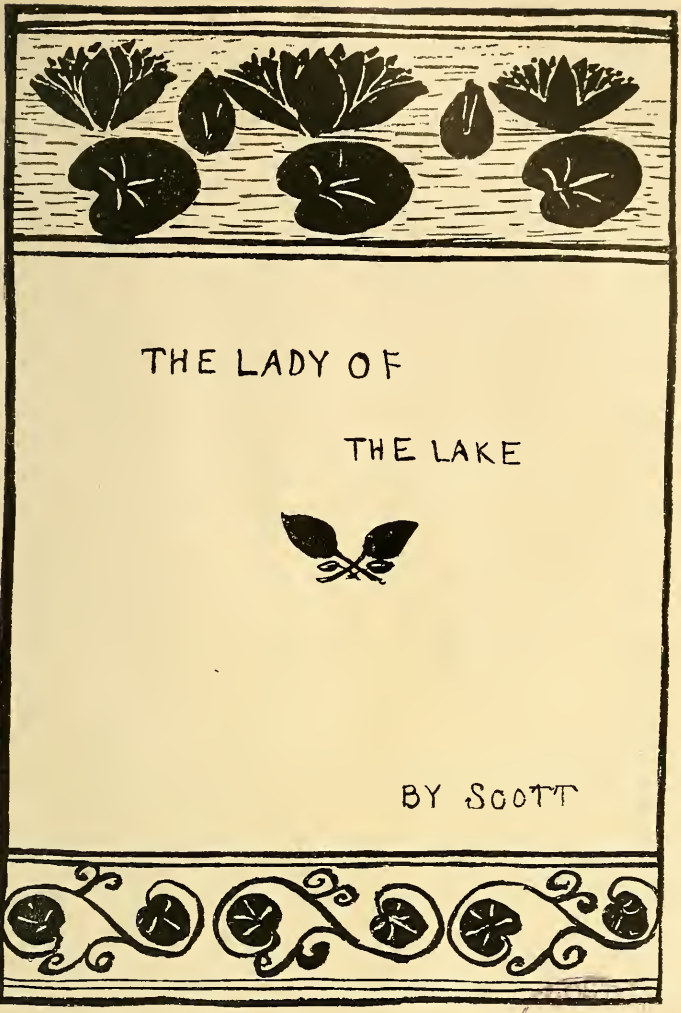
Different Treatments of Design from Unit
Suggested by Cucumber Section.



Wall-paper and Border Designs
By High School Pupil



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Book Cover Design
By Grammar Pupil

Pictorial Composition

OME assert that it is impossible to *teach* composition, saying that "it is all a matter of personal feeling."

Though in our art schools "composition classes" are usually to be found, most of those familiar with them would agree that up to the present time little serious attention has been given them, either by the instructors or students. In Paris, I have heard some of the best draughtsmen in the Julian Academy say they never made the compositions, for they felt it more important to spend their time on "more serious work." That meant to them drawing or painting academic studies from the model, not the exercise of the creative imagination which, it would seem, presents a most "*serious*" study to a prospective artist.

Since the birth of mural decoration as an art in this country, I trust the American student has begun to see art in a different light, and to realize that composition has been one of the greatest problems of the masters of painting, from the Italians down to our own time. It is true that some pictures are known principally for their fine drawing, like those of Ingres, or for technique like Frans Hals, or for rich color, like the Venetian; but what really great painter can we name whose power of composition was not highly developed, remembering that knowledge of composition shows itself in the arrangement on the canvas of even a single figure.

As Ruskin tells us, no one can be taught to compose in the highest sense of the word. No teaching will create genius. But though "art can not be *taught*,"

it may be *studied* intelligently, so that by *some* "it may be *caught*," as the result of an intelligent teacher's direction of the study.

The study of composition is practical and essential, a broader, more comprehensive, more scholarly, more artistic analysis of the work of the masters, a more carefully directed series of problems for the students, than anything that our art schools now offer.

Such a course should include lectures by the most cultured of critics and philosophers in art, and instruction of the practical and spontaneous kind that the artist alone can give. One without the other kind of instruction is incomplete, for the critic takes a wider view than the artist, though the artist alone can inspire the students to create.

But to teach composition in the public schools—is it worth while to attempt it? Most decidedly it is one of the best ways to open the minds of the children to appreciate the best in art, and better still to see nature with the artist's eyes, as a picture gallery.

> "For, don't you mark? we're made so that we love
> First, when we see them painted, things we have passed
> Perhaps a hundred times, nor cared to see;
> And so they are better painted."

Some one has truly said, "We compose when we select." Here is a clew of how to begin the composition study. Following are four lessons which have been successfully tried in our upper grammar grades this past winter. Brush and writing ink were used as a medium.

LESSON I.—The pupils cut in a piece of paper several small rectangular open-

Lesson I. Grade VI.

ings of different proportions, to use as "finders." They hold them up, and frame in the most interesting parts of the plants standing in the window. They try all the rectangular spaces and find several different arrangements, and each one makes sketches in silhouettes of the arrangements that he likes.

As the children work, the teacher selects, and pins upon the wall, the best compositions. This encourages the class to work all the more enthusiastically, as they see how many different pictures can come from one subject. After quite a number have been selected, the class stops working, and the sketches are discussed by teacher and children. They vote the best, they tell what ones look "stiff;" one too crowded, another that

Lesson II. Window Sketch. Grade VI.

is too bare is pointed out, and suggestions are made for improvements in spacing.

Lesson II.—The children draw the best picture of outside objects that they can frame by the window-pane. They move their heads, or sometimes even change their seats to find something that they like. Sometimes, if the window-panes are large, the paper "finders" used in Lesson I. make better frames. The views from some windows are meagre, but it is wonderful how even unpromising material may be arranged

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Lesson III. Grade VII.

so as to be interesting. "Values" are not attempted in these sketches. The children will tell you, if you ask them about it, that the roofs, trees, and windows are the darkest things they see. "Then we'll put them in dark, wash them right in with the ink and the rest we will outline." The examples here given show what truth can be thus simply expressed.

Lesson III. came in the season of snow storms, and in some classes it was given on the day following a storm. The children close their eyes this time, and select the picture from the photograph galleries of their memories.

Perhaps the teacher reads a bit from "Snow-Bound," or she may by conversation call to the children's minds a snowy field, a road, a house and trees. "How many can see the picture? Which is lighter, snow or sky? Then we'll leave the paper for the field, and put in a delicate wash for the sky, by mixing a little ink with water." The children all try. Some do well, and the best are compared with others not quite so successful. By questions the children are led to criticism. Then some reproductions of paintings of snow scenes (perhaps by Bruce Crane) are shown and talked over.

When they go home, you may be sure the children see more pictures in the winter landscape than they ever before thought of. Then they try again another day. In some schools they were so interested that several pupils stayed repeatedly after school to make compositions of snow scenes.

Lesson IV.—I asked one ninth grade class of intelligent children, some questions about the effect of a landscape at twilight. Answers to so simple a question as "which appears darker, the sky or the trees and buildings against it?" showed how little had been observed. Few had felt or thought of the beauty that comes over the landscape when day fades into evening. I talked to them about it, and told them what the great painter, Whistler, said, and how he painted beautiful twilights when nature "sang in tune" as he put it. I

told them how simple the values were, and tried to make them feel something of the charm and mystery of the hour.

Then they were asked to close their eyes, and I described one or two scenes, a field, a line of trees, a church spire, or a meadow, and a pool of water reflecting the light of the sky. But they were given the choice of any subject they could think of.

Lesson IV. Twilight. Grade IX.

The landscape was to be made nearly a simple silhouette, and they decided the sky would appear a little lighter above than at the horizon. When finished, the sketches were discussed. All the children observed the landscape that evening and the next, as they went home from school, and then tried another composition. The improvement in the class was wonderful. They at least had found some meaning in the word twilight.

In some classes the teachers brought in reproductions of paintings by Tyron and Dewing and showed them to the pupils after they had made their first attempts. Some pupils caught in their second sketch quite a bit of the poetry of these men applying it to their own subjects.

Occasionally in these composition lessons we discuss the space divisions. Most of the pupils understand from the work in decorative arrangement that variety of size and shape in masses or spaces is more interesting than monotony. It is best, however, not to insist very much upon this phase of the subject. Direct and simple expression of an idea is more important, by far, than the relations of lines and spaces abstractly considered. If we attempt to teach composition *by rule* we are doing worse that to attempt nothing at all. About all that can be done in school is to encourage the children in the exercise of their creative imaginations. Criticisms should lead toward simpler, clearer means of expression. The study of good pictures in connection with the work will both stimulate the imagination and aid expression. Ruskin's chapter on the laws of composition in "Elements of Drawing" should be an inspiration to a teacher. Sir Joshua Reynolds in his "Discourses" also gives some fundamental thoughts on the subject of composition. Children may be led to *feel* the necessity of obeying most of these laws, but the *laws* should never be given to the children.

Pen Drawing.

First Practice.—Outline.

ITH so good a medium as pen and ink at hand in the school, let it be used to give variety to the drawing, if for no other reason. If your pupils have been drawing up to the present time in pencil, see what interest will be created if, some morning, instead of pencils and erasers, pens are given out. We all know the difficulty of getting the pupils to work without too much use of the eraser, to think before they draw, to carefully observe proportions and character before placing a line on the paper. With ink, erasure is impossible. Thought beforehand becomes a necessity, and so we have a second reason for the use of the pen.

The pen has always been used for drawing from the time when Raphael and Michael Angelo made studies for their paintings. Pen-drawing, as it exists to-day, however, is a modern art, the outgrowth of mechanical processes employed in engraving illustrations. The cheapness with which pen-drawing may be reproduced makes the medium especially useful for illustrative purposes. Hence there is a practical reason for teaching its use in the public schools.

In what grade of the school it would be best to begin with pen and ink might be a matter of question. The sixth would be certainly quite early enough. Compared with the pencil, the pen is difficult to use; therefore, it seems unwise to attempt its use until some facility in seeing and putting down proportions correctly has been acquired. The pen at first will seem

hard and unsympathetic; the first lines will be crude and without feeling. But practice will tend toward freedom. In the hands of a master, the pen becomes almost as a living thing, responding to every impulse of the artist.

The distinctive charm of a pen-drawing lies in the beauty and expressiveness of its lines. Though masses of light and shade be represented, no single touch lacking in grace or character may be used; every stroke must have a meaning, must add something to the interest of the sketch. The study, then, of the medium should begin by the study of line.

The first question usually asked by the uninitiated, as he sees the variety of lines employed in a single drawing, is, "What pen was used?" The artist will answer, "The pen matters little; the way it is used matters much." To be more explicit, however, almost any school writing pen (not too fine) is good. It should not be fine enough to be scratchy, nor so coarse that a fine line can not be produced.

For the first work in the grammar school, the ordinary writing ink is good enough, though liquid India ink, which is perfectly black, produces a better effect, and is always used by artists in drawing illustrations.

The paper should be hard and smooth. A manilla is fully as pleasing as white. The ordinary manilla used for pencil-work is too soft, and is liable to catch the pen and produce a blurred or uneven line. Unruled writing paper is as good as any. The artists use bristol board.

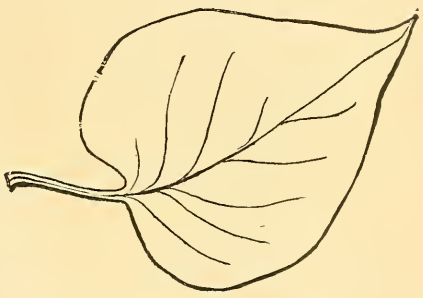
Having decided that the study of line is of the first importance, how can we better begin than by drawing outlines of natural forms? For in the vegetable world is an unlimited variety in character of line, and by continued striving to reproduce these lines, a free and vigorous touch for our later work will be acquired, if by any means.

Perhaps there is nothing better for first attempts than the outline of single leaves. Take for the first lesson

two of contrasted character, though similar in general shape, as the lilac and birch.

The pen should generally be held so that the nibs will move *parallel* to each other. It can thus be made to draw a line of any desired width according to the pressure brought to bear upon it. If the pen moves sidewise, the nibs taking the same path, it, of course, is impossible to control the width of the line, as pressure causes the nibs to spread in the wrong direction. Let us now study the contour of the two leaves, comparing the entire margin of the lilac with the jagged edge of the birch. Though both are generally triangular in shape, what a difference in character—the lilac being heart-shaped, flowing in outline, the birch resembling an Indian arrow-head, probably having served as its model.

Note in the lilac the line of growth, starting with the base of the petiole and following upward to the apex of the leaf. Then lightly draw this main line, striving to express in these first touches, the feeling of vigorous life, the springing quality of nature. After lightly indicating the greatest width of the leaf, the contour should be drawn with appreciation for its suavity and grace.



No directions can be given as to just how the pen should be used, but if the character of the leaf is *felt*, the student must express something of it in his drawing. He will learn, as he goes on, to draw a sweeping line quickly, and yet coaxingly. After drawing the lilac a few times, try the birch. The line of growth is different, changing direction more where the petiole ends and the midrib begins. The jagged contour of this leaf must be drawn with a broken, quick and angular feeling.

We have made the drawings thus far without prelim-

inary pencil lines. It is better, at first, to work in this way, though mere accuracy of drawing may suffer. If pencil is first used, as it may be in more difficult subjects, the lines should be so lightly drawn that erasure is unnecessary, and simply made to indicate placing and proportions. If a light and accurate pencil drawing is first made, and then traced over with a pen, the result will be a monotonous, dull and uninteresting outline, entirely devoid of character or briskness, and consequently valueless. The strokes must be born of the pen.

After many sketches of single leaves, a twig with two or three leaves makes a good study, and to render the texture of the woody twig requires a vigorous touch.

The fall of the year is an excellent time for beginning our ink studies. Some things seem made for pen and ink, and perhaps nothing is better than many of the seed pods. Among these are the milkweeds, the mullein, with its dried stalk and leaves, the sedges and the grasses.

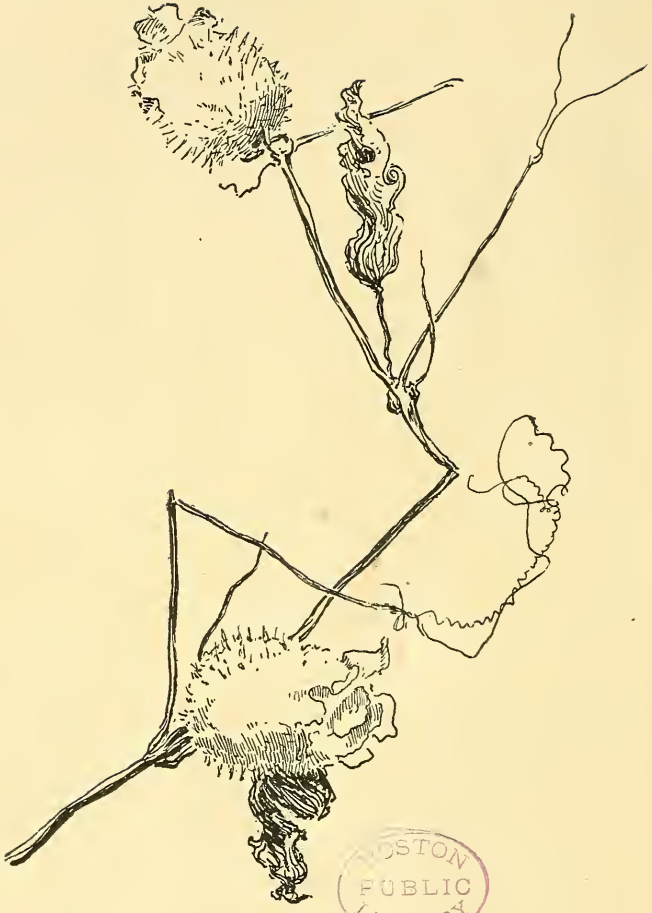
From pure outline, we may in these go a step farther, and by a few well-chosen touches, without actually representing light and shade, effectively suggest bits of detail where they appear most prominent. Before doing this, we must study our model carefully with half-closed eyes, to see what details remain most strongly visible, and then put down only these.

Outlines should also be studied in this way, and those

parts accented which are seen the most clearly. Only the largest veins in the leaves should be drawn, and these not too strongly. The beauty and charm of our drawing will lie in its suggestion, rather than in elaboration. All but essentials should be omitted, for we are now at work with the shorthand of art.

Good pen-drawings are not hard to find in our best magazines, and oftentimes, too, the newspapers bring out clever work.

A fertile source of inspiration is the work of the Japanese, and the outlines in the Japanese sketch-books (which are not expensive) nearly always show remarkably fine character. Good examples before the class can do as much as the teacher to refine the taste and quicken the perception of the pupils, and to help create an "art atmosphere" in the schoolroom.



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Still Life.

HE principles to be mastered in the study of artistic expression are the same essentially regardless of the materials employed.

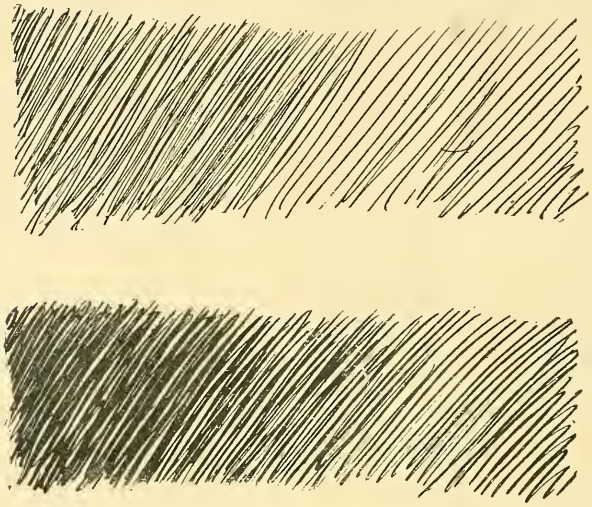
The old question which the amateur likes to ask, "Do you paint in oil or water-color?" irritates the artist who has mastered his profession, for the learning of any medium is but a slight task compared to that of learning to *see* truly, and to record artistically the subject in hand. The masters use anything that comes handy, or perhaps I might better say, the medium best suited to a given subject. The study of a medium consists largely in learning its limitations, and knowing for what subjects we can appropriately use it.

As I have already said, pen and ink in the schools should follow the work in pencil. It would be foolish indeed to attempt any light and shade work with the pen until the pupils could represent simply and directly the broad effects in pencil or charcoal. It is not the purpose of this book to treat the subject of drawing or to lay out a course. The work with the pen should come in incidentally when the pupils have done well with their other work. I therefore assume, on the part of the reader, an understanding of the principles of drawing.

Our work in pen and ink outline has made the pupils feel somewhat at home with the scratchy pen, for a pen is more or less scratchy at best. Let us now give a little practice work to help in producing tones or values by series of lines.

Have two rectangles drawn with pencil, and the first briskly covered with generally parallel lines, about like those in the upper right part of Fig. 1, that is, not bearing on heavily or placing the lines very near together. The left half may then be darkened by going over with a series of similar lines filling in the spaces. We have thus produced two light grays. The beginner likes to get his darker tones by going over and over, but if this is done, a mussy and characterless effect results.

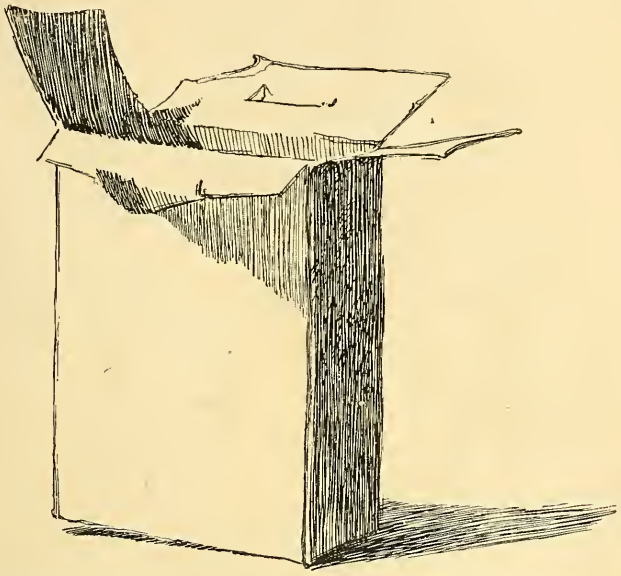
To get a darker tone, more pressure should be brought to bear as in the second rectangle, right-hand part.



The left-hand portion has been darkened by going over. Oblique lines seem the easiest to draw, and for that reason have been used in this first practice. It should be noted in the examples given that the lines are not perfectly straight or parallel, but are freely drawn. This is one of the most important qualities to obtain—grace of line, lines with artistic feeling. Anything mechanical should be avoided. The "carefully careless" effect is the one to be striven for.

As pen and ink is a scratchy medium, we must avoid subjects which are smooth and unbroken in character, and the white sphere, cylinder and cube are perhaps the hardest things we could possibly take. They are not for pen and ink in the hands of school-children, and even a master would *choose* another medium if he had them to draw.

The bird-seed box, with its bent covers and the little torn place in the upper flap, is as simple a beginning as we could have.



With a hard pencil, a light outline of the object and of the shadows should first be drawn. Then the darkest shadows should be vigorously hatched in, as freely as in the practice lines. Afterward the lighter shades, and lastly, here and there, where absolutely necessary, a sketchy outline. Generally speaking, the direction of the lines used in the shades should follow the direction of the surfaces, but no rule can be given, and in

the drawing of the box, the direction of the light has served as a suggestion for direction of line in several places. Only repeated experiment will develop the feeling for line, which is the all-in-all of pen and ink.

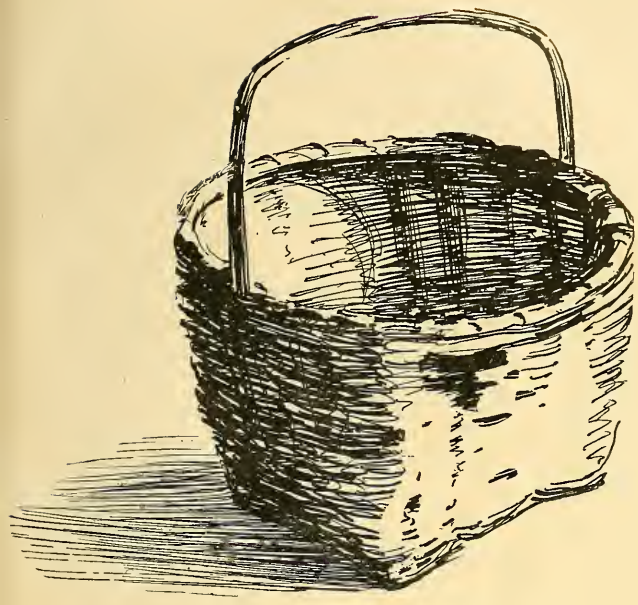
The basket is well suited to pen and ink, for the lines as used express not only shade and direction of surfaces, but texture. The series of short, bold strokes have been made to curve in imitation of the withes of the basket, and the ends of the lines butting up against each other suggest the vertical strands. Inside, cross-hatching has been added to show these latter, but it should be avoided when possible, as the most direct effects are the best.

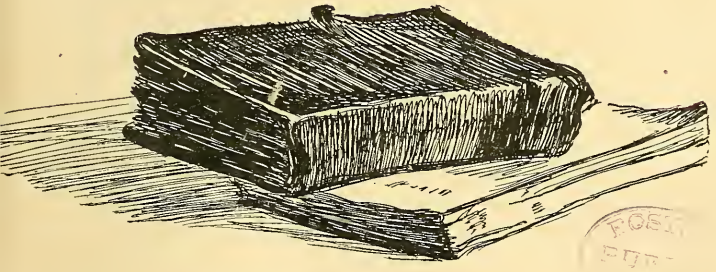
In both these subjects color has been omitted, and white backgrounds have been employed for simplicity's sake.

In the group of two old books, one of dark leather, the other paper, color is suggested. Here the direction of surfaces has been carefully followed; the oldness of the books is readily shown by the uneven lines, which the pen loves so well to make, and the leaves are delightful to represent. Simplicity is of the greatest importance, both in the arrangement of objects and in the lighting. Not more than three or four values should be attempted, everything light should be rendered white, and slight variations in values disregarded.

Keep watch in the magazines for drawings that will illustrate simple and direct treatment.

Charles Dana Gibson in *Harper's*, *Century* and *Life*, is a good man to study. Albert Sterner's illustrations to "Prue and I," published by Harpers, will be an inspiration. In the past Joseph Pennell has done much in landscape. The magazines will possess a greater interest to the pupils if their attention is called to the pen-drawings.





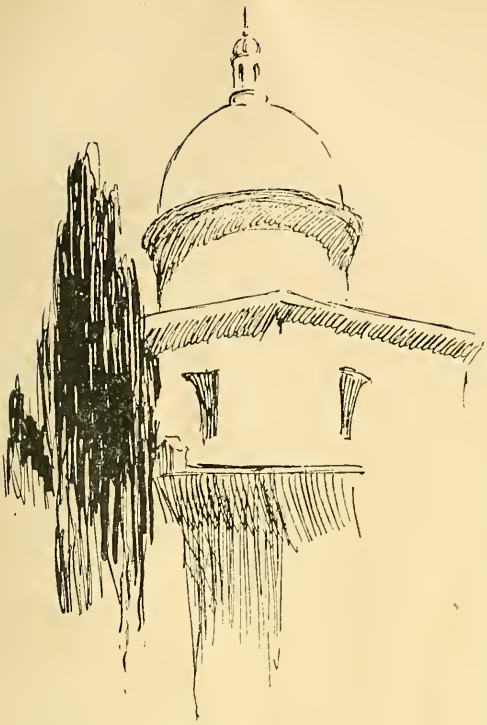
Landscape.

IF drawing is well taught by a sympathetic and artistic teacher, the pupils should take great interest in outside work, hunting the town over for picturesque bits. Such a teacher gives many suggestions of what to look for, shows her own sketch-book, pins up good sketches on the schoolroom walls, and thus creates enthusiasm.

The greatest problem in sketching, in all art (we might say in *life*), is to see things simply, to select the essentials from the bewildering masses of detail that always confront us. All first attempts at sketching are "cut up," there is an attempt to represent too much. To learn *what not to draw* is a most important thing in all artistic work.

It is seldom, in our public schools, that the drawing teacher can accompany her pupils out of doors, and though the principles of drawing are the same there, as with indoor subjects, the multiplicity of details in landscape is apt to confuse the beginner and make him feel that a new problem is presented. "How do you draw trees?" "Shall I try to put in all those shingles?" "How can I represent all that grass?" These are familiar questions. The answer must ever be the same, "You can't draw *everything*, so you must draw only that which gives the effect."

Pencil is by far the most convenient and best medium for our sketch-books; but an occasional exercise in the schoolroom in translating pencil into pen-sketches, is excellent practice for the pupils, as it gives opportunity to the teacher to suggest simpler modes of working, and better notions of composition. The change of medium is stimulating, for nothing gives opportunity for a brisker or more interesting sketch than the pen.



To choose subjects and so treat them that their values compose well is of great importance. Mr. D. A. Gregg, well known for his architectural pen-drawings, has published an interesting book on architectural rendering in pen and ink, for the help of his classes at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Though in some respects his methods are somewhat formal, to fit the needs of his pupils, the means of obtaining effective composition of values is excellently illustrated by numerous examples. This is his theory: "As to the arrangement of values, a few simple principles may be had in mind, as much to help one to avoid mistakes as to produce results.

"*Breadth*—Large effects—treat the drawing, as a whole, in large masses.

"*Principality.*—Avoid competition of darks or lights.

"*Repetition.*—Having a leading dark or light, smaller repetitions of the same bring the drawing into restful harmony.

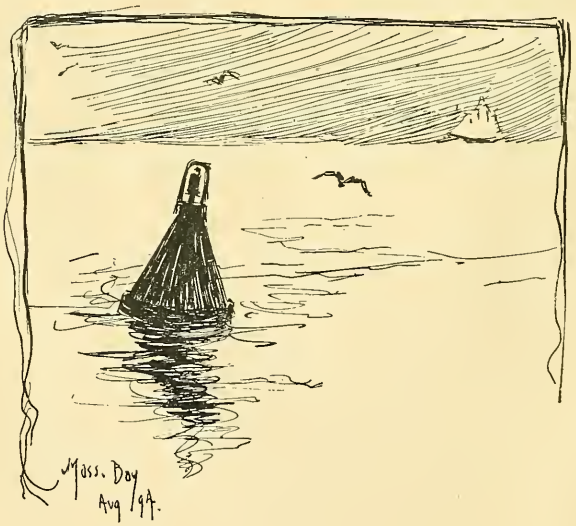
"The principle underlying and creating all such rules is the demand for restfulness or repose."

Ask your pupils, then, to each sketch some simple subject, as a tower, a dome, a portico, or a picturesque

old house. If possible, get into the picture a single mass of dark foliage, and it will be advisable to make the sketch with the sun shining, so that well-defined shadows may be seen. These shadows should be our especial study. They should be drawn in very flatly, but with great regard to their shape. They are much more important than outlines, which are oftentimes quite unnecessary in giving the best effect. Outlines should be touched in sparingly where absolutely necessary to bring out form after the shadows have been drawn.

When all are ready with a simple and fairly satisfactory pencil sketch, it is time to consider making from it a pen-and-ink. On the paper or bristol-board which is to be used should first be sketched a very light pencil outline, including outline of shadows. Then begins work with the pen, and how to handle the lines will be a question which will present itself. To this no definite answer can be given. Different artists express themselves as differently as are their temperaments, and this individual expression is one of the greatest charms of their work.

We may then say that the simplest, most natural way of getting the result is the best, but to find this simplest way takes much practice. It would do the pupils no harm to make one or two copies of good work, but



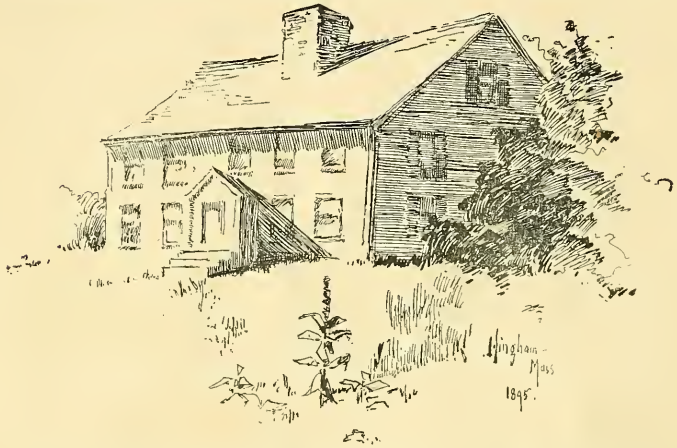
they will gain more by making original sketches, and afterward studying good examples of pen-work, to see how the difficulties which they encountered have been overcome by artists. There should, however, be no attempt to imitate one man's style of handling; the student should strive to express nature simply. There is a great difference between copying a *manner*, and consulting work for suggestions only. The former is as the parrot talks; the latter is thoughtful study for clearer means of expression.

Our outline studies from plant life have shown us the joyousness, the grace, the freedom and vigor of nature's lines. Let us remember this, and even when using a series of lines to produce a value, make them with as joyous and as free a swing, always remembering that the character of what we are drawing should determine the character of our lines.

But, however the student may use his lines (and of course there will be much crudity), he should not try for more than three values. For example, taking the sketch of the old house, we have the dark masses of foliage, and two lighter grays in shades and shadows. Everything light is left white, including the sky, the sunny side of the building and the grass. Shingles, clapboards and bricks have been neglected, and yet suggested by a touch or two. If all this detail had been put in the effect of sunshine would have been lost, for with our ink, where every line is *black*, exaggeration is sure to result. It is, therefore, a question of *what* it is best to sacrifice—literal prosy truths of construction, or the poetic truths of sunshine and air. Let us put down, then, only what charms us, and if we are looking with artistic eyes, it will be the joyous-

ness of nature. The more we can leave out, and yet say all that is interesting, the better.

The two drawings illustrating some of the common errors of beginners in pen-drawing are given as warnings of *what not to do.* In the first one the house is outlined with a hard, even line, and shadows are but weakly shown. There is no definiteness of value, no large mass of dark to give force or richness of effect, and the pen has been timidly used throughout with no variety or beauty of line. To darken the trees, meaningless cross-hatching has been introduced, and yet they are not nearly dark enough, while little spots of black have been used in a most foolish way on the light side of the house in the windows and door. The lines in the sky further weaken the effect of the drawing.



The second drawing shows what a more clever tyro is apt to fall into—spottiness of effect. Compare this drawing with its forced darks, and its false lights, its lack of simplicity in massing, and its generally unquiet and cut-up appearance with the drawings that are given as examples of simple direct handling.

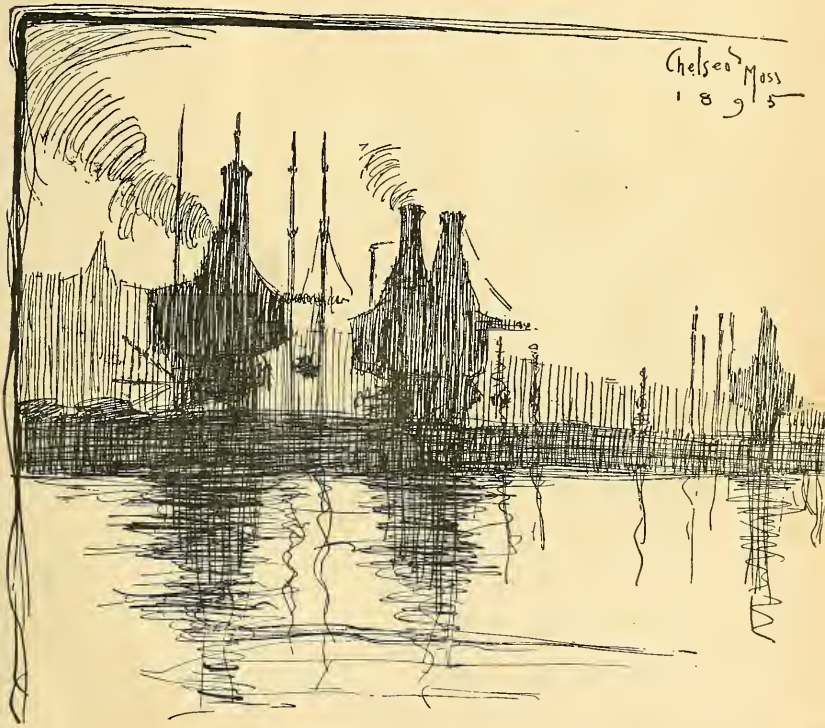
By studying these drawings some hints may be gotten. Oftentimes the direction of the sunlight has been

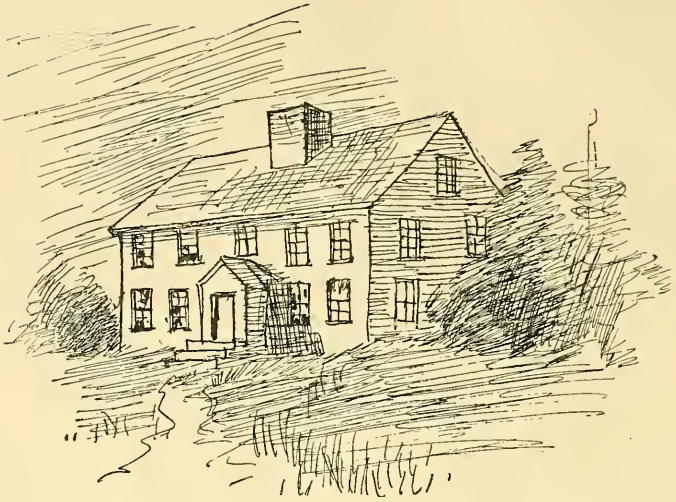
kept in the lines of a cast shadow. In the old house the lines of the shade side follow the direction of the clapboards. Stronger outlines are sometimes used in foreground objects to assist the perspective. The foliage is treated as masses, there being no attempt to draw individual leaves, and yet the character of the lines suggest the modeling of the trees. Cloud effects are not attempted.

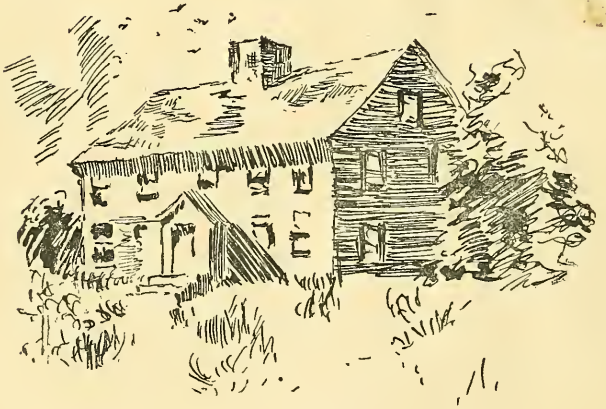
The sketch of the whistling buoy is interesting as a simple study in composition. The lonely moan of these ominous ocean guards must impress all who hear them. . Even on a summer day they remind us of storm and danger, as they rock restlessly, while the sea-gulls wheel about them, their only companions.

Notice the "leading dark" mass, and how the sky has been given a value here, to bring out the white sail, and to make the water appear light at the horizon.

Tell the pupils to keep on the lookout for subjects that can be rendered in two or three values.







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"Dont's."

N every high school are some clever and artistic boys and girls, who need but little urging to become enthusiasts in outdoor sketching. The best incentive to such work is the occasional sight of interesting sketches, of familiar local subjects, by the teacher.

Is not this too often forgotten, in the many duties of the drawing supervisor, and does she not too often find herself becoming a "teaching machine?" Mere talking soon grows "flat, stale, and unprofitable." It is the drawing teacher, who draws and paints, that commands the respect of her pupils and inspires them to work by an enthusiasm that is real.

Of course she is busy, if conscientious in her work, but there is *some* spare time; and if it comes only in fragments, a sketch now and then, a note of something she would like to paint, just a suggestion of a good composition, or a decorative motive—making these constantly helps her to grow in artistic perception and feeling, so that when summer comes, when she can work seriously, she has gained during the year, instead of losing by "getting out of practice."

For quick notes, nothing will ever be more convenient or satisfactory than the pencil, but pen and ink often produce an interesting effect if knowingly handled.

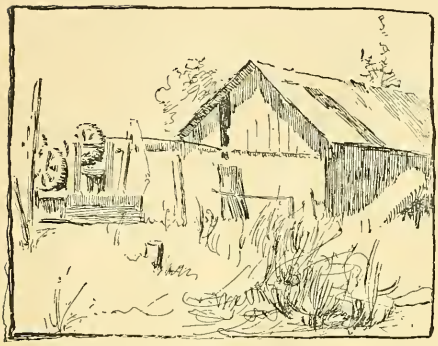
An afternoon's bicycle ride into the country, with occasional ten-minute halts, ought to yield a good harvest of composition notes. A piece of cardboard with rectangular openings cut in it, is most helpful as a "finder." We can frame in any part of the landscape by using these openings as windows, and thus decide upon our composition before beginning to draw.

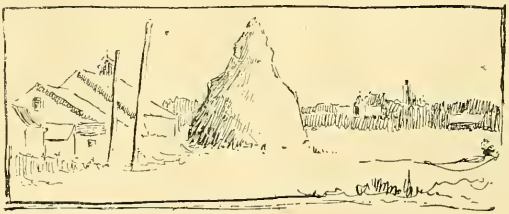
The accompanying sketches are the result of an afternoon's outing on the wheel, and are just such sub-

jects as almost any New England landscape furnishes. The placing within the spaces, the simple massing of the strongest light and shade effects, and the free-handling are the principal points to be noted.

The suggestions given in previous chapters of this series about composition and technique have been applied in the choice and treatment of these simple notes.

They are intended as hints of what the supervisor, by example, should lead the clever high school boys and girls to do in out-door pen and ink sketching.





Out-Door Notes.

Rapid Notes.

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Half-Hour Sketch.

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